

# A Study of the Korean People

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1.

Our interest in Korea and its peoples rests in great measure on the fact that, owing to its exclusiveness in the past, old China as it was before the Manchu supremacy has been preserved in Korea; even Korean Chinese stands much nearer to the ancient language than that of China herself. Their intense conservatism and love of immemorial customs have preserved one of the primitive races of the world unimproved and unmodernized. Korea is the Middle Ages transplanted into the Twentieth Century. Having reached a culminating point in her history more than five hundred years ago and having suffered a steady decline and disintegration since then, Korea presents an excellent field for the exploitation of Western culture. One of the most interesting world problems today is the regeneration of Korea, politically and commercially through the instrumentality of Japan and morally through Christian missions.

The magical development and marvelous growth of Japan can be comprehended readily if one consider the fact that the Samurai class were educated military leaders under the feudal barons and that when forbidden to wear the swords which had been their badge of office, in order to maintain their high position they were forced to adopt Western ideas in the intellectual, political and industrial realms. Japan's growth has been superficial and utilitarian, the women and lower classes sharing but slightly in the phenomenal advance in civilization. As expressed by Mr. Homer B. Hulbert in "The Passing of Korea", Japan has not dug until she struck the source of Western civilization but has merely built a cistern in which to store its more obvious and tangible results. The question arises, can such a nation force an exotic civilization upon Korea when an educated, patriotic leadership is entirely wanting there as is clearly shown by the continuous moral failure of the government, the ages of oppression by a cor-

1 p. 6.

rupt officialdom and the inability of the nation to reform when given a fair chance to rise to its responsibility as an international power?

Whether or not Japan was providentially destined to transform Korea the fact remains that the annexation was a political necessity and Japan, with a high sense of public morality and public welfare, is eminently fitted to establish an ethical basis for a righteous government and commercial honesty, and whatever her faults and abuses, Japan is giving Korea the blessings of safe society, of knowledge, of commerce, of justice, of agriculture, of sanitation, and of renewed life. The second influence which is molding the New Korea is none the less successful; in fact the growth of Christianity has been phenomenal and real. The ideal of a self supporting native Church with no creed but the Bible and the demand for trained leaders have been important factors in awakening the desire for up-to-date schools and education. Whatever the outcome of the Korean problem, a broad and deep foundation is being laid and the people will respond in time to the efforts being made on their behalf.

In order to understand the life of any nation it is necessary to know its geographical foundation and the various external forces which have been factors in moulding the character of the people. This is particularly true in regard to Korea as position, soil and climate have all been powerful factors in developing and augmenting her conservative tendencies. Not being content with the natural barriers of sea and rocky shores and rivers the Koreans devastated the coasts and a wide strip on the banks of the boundary rivers to discourage all foreigners who might seek access to the country. The soil of the peninsula is such that this twofold isolation has not seriously affected the physical life of the nation as sufficient food is produced for home consumption, but the Korean is centuries behind in thought life. A general geographical survey will bring out the various factors in the development of the Korean nation.

Korea is a peninsula projecting from the northeastern part of Asia as Florida projects from the United States and dividing the Yellow Sea from the Sea of Japan. It lies between the 34th and 43rd degrees north latitude and 124th and 131st degrees east longitude. Its eastern coast faces the islands of Japan; its western coast confronts the mainland of China proper and its northern land border is Chinese Manchuria except at the extreme north where it comes in contact with the Russian coast province ceded by China in 1860. It is 600 miles long and 135 miles wide having an area of about 90,000 square miles or about the area of Kansas. The coast line of 1740 miles comprises some of the most magnificent harbors in the world and unlike the Russian harbors to the north they are not icebound in the winter. The eastern shore is steep and rocky with very deep water but insignificant tides of but a few feet; The southern tip of Korea has a frontage of hundreds of islands, the largest being Quelpart, and the western shore, though low and shelving and cut up by many estuaries, is visited by tides of from twenty to thirty-eight feet and the tortuous and inadequately charted and lighted channels through the fringing archipelago make navigation difficult. The principal harbors are Wonsan on Broughton's Bay, Fusan, Masanpa and Makpo on the south, and Kunsan, Chinampo, Yongampo, Chemulpo and Wiju on the west coast. Chemulpo, the harbor of Seoul, is scarcely a harbor at all but a roadstead, the inner harbor being in the fierce tide-way of the Han river and is available for but five or six vessels at a time.

The general surface of Korea is hilly. In the north are several mountain groups with definite centers, chief among which is the White Head mountain with an elevation of 8000 feet. Many of the mountains are evidently extinct volcanoes, especially the White Mountain in whose crater lies a lake, the Dragon's Pool, which gives rise to two boundary rivers, the Tumen flowing east and the Yalu west making Korea an island in the strict sense of the term. A range of mountains running south ward divides Korea unequally, the eastern slope being narrow and fertile, the western consisting of innumerable rich and well watered valleys and slopes lying among the lateral spurs which

4.

the range throws off. Lakes are few and insignificant and plains are of very limited extent. The rivers are numerous, shallow, impetuous and navigable for a short distance only. The exceptions are the Yalu in the far north, the boundary between Korea and China for one hundred and seventy five miles, the Taitong a little farther south, the Nakdong most southerly and the Han in the center, which, rising thirty miles from the Sea of Japan, after cutting Korea nearly in half reaches the west coast near Chemulpo the port of Seoul, and in spite of many and severe rapids it is an important highway for one hundred and sixty miles. Owing to the absence of industrial education, the Koreans are not deriving as much benefit from their rivers as they might for they can, by application of intelligent efforts, be converted into a valuable system of communication.

The climate of Korea may be briefly described as the same as that of the eastern part of the United States between Maine and South Carolina, with this difference that the prevailing southeast summer winds in Korea bring the moisture from the warm ocean current that strikes Japan from the south and precipitates it over almost the whole of Korea, so there is a distinctly rainy season during July and August. The average yearly rainfall is thirty-six inches, a little more than half falling during the rainy season. It is ample and reliable and irrigation is necessary only for the rice crop. The four seasons are well marked. The three months of spring are mild and temperate, the autumn is unsurpassed for evenings, and the winter is superb with still atmosphere and no extremes. The temperature ranges from twenty degrees Fahrenheit below zero to ninety eight above. The average summer temperature at Seoul is seventy five degrees, winter thirty three.

The rich soil of Korea has made it possible for her to maintain her commercial independence until recent years when Japan has thrust the product of Western civilization upon her. The lack of conservation of natural vegetable life on the hillsides has worked one good at least in that the frequent rains enrich the valleys with

their alluvium. These rich valleys are eminently fitted for agriculture. All cereals such as rice, barley, wheat and millets, and various root crops flourish. Rice is the chief staple of the country, a good crop making trade brisk and a poor one bringing it to a standstill. Cotton is grown in all parts of the country and covers about 300,000 acres! "With indifferent seed and no encouragement, Korea is the fifth largest cotton producing country in the world." Hemp and flax are largely cultivated, and as there are no sheep from which to obtain wool, linen, grasscloth, and cotton are the common fabrics for clothing, silk being used to some extent by the officials only. The product which touches the Korean most intimately however, is tobacco. Not only men but women and children smoke extensively.

Korea is richly endowed with all fruits common to the temperate zone with the exception of apples, persimmons, however, taking their place. Plums, apricots, nectarines pears, peaches, and grapes are common but because of the various germs and parasites which attack the ripe fruit, they are usually eaten green and so prove a menace to the people in the spread of cholera. Owing to the barren coasts and the hillsides near Seoul, Korea is sometimes considered devoid of timber but there are extensive forests near the Manchurian frontier from which large quantities are being cut. The pine is the most important tree, entering into the construction of houses, boats, and bridges. Next in importance is the bamboo which is used for hats, fans, screens, lanterns and many other articles. Willows are used largely in making shoes, chests and baskets when lightness is desirable. There are many hard woods such as oak, elm and beech. An important tree found in the southern provinces is the mulberry, the inner bark of which is used exclusively in making paper.

Korea has a generous share of animal life. Of domestic animals the bullock is easily first as no other animal could plow the adhesive mud of the rice fields, or carry such enormous loads. The Koreans have never used milk or any of its products, a proof that they have never been a nomadic people; and the fact that sheep are entirely absent except as imported for sacrificial pur-

*"Call of Korea" Underwood p 31*



6.

poses shows that they have never been a pastoral people. The Korean pony is small, seldom over ten to twelve hands high, and is used only under the pack or saddle, never as a draft animal. A small donkey is sometimes used for riding. The only other domestic animals are a wolfish but thoroughly domesticated dog, a loathsome razor-back breed of pig and a back-fence variety of cat. Of wild beasts the Manchurian tiger takes the lead. It is universally feared and with cause, for it not only enters villages and carries off pigs and dogs but men as well. No Korean will travel at night unless with a large company well supplied with torches. Deer are common, a small bear and the leopard are found occasionally, and among lesser animals are the badger, wild-cat, otter and sable. All game birds are found in great abundance. Although there are no deadly snakes insect life abounds. The waters about Korea swarm with fish of a hundred kinds, the commonest being the ling. Trout and salmon frequent the streams. Whales are so numerous off the eastern coast that a Japanese company has been engaged in catching them for years.

Korea is a land supposedly rich in minerals such as gold, silver, copper, and iron but because of the sacred character of the hills, very little mining has been done. With very primitive placer mines gold is the most important product. Iron ore abounds and in some mines natural metallic iron is found. Quick silver, lead and tin are plentiful. There are large sections where slate prevails and here coal deposits, both anthracite and bituminous, are found. North of Seoul are very extensive lava beds and volcanic rock occurs frequently. Beautiful sandstones, marbles and other building stones are found in the mountains. Korea's brightest economic prospects consist in the future development of her mineral resources.

From this rapid survey of the resources of Korea, we find that they are undeveloped, not exhausted. An explanation of the poverty of the people must be looked for in the political administration where the possession of wealth, except by the few in power, is considered a crime and a premium is put on laziness. The energetic Japanese are rapidly developing Korean resources and

7.

furthering economic prosperity by the establishment of transportation facilities and the installation of better means of communication. The 688 miles of railways from Fusan in the extreme south to Wiju in the north run thru the richer half of Korea, comprising nearly 70% of both the cultivated area and farmers families of the entire peninsula. This railroad means much to Japan as well as Korea, especially since Japan's right of river and coast navigation opens up the richest and most populous country to Japanese economic enterprise. A telegraph system of 3000 miles, a postal and banking system under Japanese control mark the beginnings of a new economic life for the Korean people.

The increased productiveness of the peninsula will enable a larger population to gain a livelihood. The present population has been variously estimated at from 10,000,000 to 18,000,000,. The 'New International Year Book' for 1907 gives 14,000,000 but there has never been a thorough census and tax returns are not to be relied upon as it is to the advantage of the collector to return a smaller number so he can retain a larger percentage for himself. The last house census in 1904 gave a report of only 9,500,000, estimating five persons to a house. "Tarr and McMurray's geography gives Korea 159 persons per square mile but as the arable land comprises only about one quarter of its surface Korea is possible one of the most densely populated countries instead of being half way down the list. The people live for the most part in numerous towns and innumerable villages, even the farmers form little hamlets for protection and companionship. There are several large cities, Seoul the capital having a population of from 250,000 to 300,000. Songdo, PyengYang Taiku, Fusan and Chemulpo are other important cities.

1. p 443

The Korean race is commonly regarded as a branch of the Mongolic stock but it really seems to have resulted from the fusion of two distinct elements: the Mongolic and the Caucasian; the former, no doubt, predominating. National records speak of two races; the San San, prevailing in the central part and apparently Mongols, the Sienpi, representing the fair type in the south. These gradually merged into the blended race, the Kaori, or ancient Korean. These Caucasians were probably Dravidians who were driven into the highlands of India by the influx of Aryans and some may have found their way eastward along the Malay peninsula and northward into Korea and Japan, the Ainu there being a relic of such a migration. The Caucasian element seems to have preceeded the Mongol tribe but the were gradually outnumbered and largely absorbed by the yellow stock owing to constant migrations especially from China. With every revolution or change of dynasty in China the leaders of the defeated party usually took refuge in Korea. The Mongol stock was thus continually fortified while the stream of Caucasian migrations had ceased to flow from prehistoric times. Hence it is not surprising that the prevailing type is distinctly Mongoloid. Five sixths of the people have broad, rather flat features, high cheek bones, slightly oblique black eyes, small nose, thick lips, black hair, sparse beard and yellowish or coppery complexion. The other sixth, representing the original Caucasian element, are characterised by rounded or oval features, large nose, light complexion, blue eyes, delicate skin, full beard and hair so distinctly a russet brown as to require a frequent application of lamp black to bring it to a fashionable color. Between these extremes there naturally occur many intermediate types which have given rise to the various opinions of travelers concerning racial origins and the ethnic relations of the Korean people.

The original Mongol stock was of a Sibiric type including besides the Koreans and Japanese, the Tartars, Finns and the Tungusic groups, as distinct from the Semitic branch which includes the Chinese, Thibetans and Indo-Chinese, much later offshoots from the Mongolic

stock. This division is based on language, the former group speaking a polysyllabic and agglutinative language; the latter a tonic monosyllabic. Today the Koreans are a conglomerate of almost all the nationalities of Asia, although most closely connected with China in race and civilization. They are between the insular and continental Mongoloid peoples, are taller and more robust with much lighter complexions and far more regular features than the average Mongol. The fusion of yellow and white elements is more marked than elsewhere in east Asia. The Korean's general physique is good, the average height of the men being five and a half feet, some however reaching six feet. They are very strong and well developed. The Koreans walk well, whether the studied swing of the patrician as he idles his time on the street or the short, firm stride of the plebeian on business. The women are more puny than the men and are not conspicuous for beauty. The Korean values only one physical charm in woman and that is her abundant head of hair and fine eyebrows. The hands and feet of both sexes and all classes are very well cared for, the women never having deformed their feet as have the Chinese.

The usual expression of the Korean is cheerful with a dash of puzzlement. They show their best aspect quick intelligence rather than force or strength of will. The race lacks the energy and ambition of the Japanese and the industry and persistence of the Chinese. They are not as volatile and fickle as the one nor as phlegmatic or stolidly conservative as the other. Their mental attitude may be designated as realistic idealism, borrowing their realistic tendencies from China and the idealistic from Japan. Their national ideal is the scholar, whereas China's ideal is commercial and Japan's military. According to George Kennan, "The Japanese are clean, enterprising, intelligent, brave and industrious while the Koreans are dirty, apathetic, slow-witted, lacking in spirit, densely ignorant and lazy. The Koreans had the best start but Japan advanced while Korea declined. Its civilization is not stagnated ~~but~~ as China's, but is rotten and can be

1. Outlook Vol 81 p 307. "Korea a Degenerate State"

restored only by a long process of remedial correction". The character of the Koreans is a riddle: indifferent to changes, they face life or death with the same disinterested, almost fatalistic, placidity and yet they are supremely selfish and patriotic. They have plenty of energy to take pleasure in wild and brutal stone fights but can be bullied by a more assertive people. Lying, stealing and gambling are frightfully common and cruelty, brutality and cheapness of human life are appalling. While the Korean character has been cramped and distorted by centuries of repression, antiquated education and corrupt government it has not been hopelessly ruined. In brief, their general characteristics are procrastination, deceit and inactivity due more to external conditions than to latent laziness; a desire for sons to perform the duties of ancestral worship; taking things easy, troubles and all; a sense of humor; cheerfulness and hospitality. They are a quiet, orderly people simple and childlike, peaceable, friendly and capable, yet lacking in moral fiber. For centuries office holders have been squeezing most of the virile, aggressive, independent manhood out of them, but, with a fair government and a sense of security and encouragement from outside, they will in time make a splendid people as is proven by the fact that missionary schools, Christian education and foreign travel have already transformed a number into intelligent, trustworthy and patriotic men.

Before taking up the social classes, it will be well to consider the clan organization as it is the fundamental basis of social life and touches the Korean in many phases of his life. The feudalistic tendencies of the Korean were never fully developed but the various clans have maintained themselves at a high stage of social efficiency. The head of the clan is the direct male descendant of the ancestor by premogeniture. He governs by the aid of a council elected by groups of the family in various parts of the country. Seoul is the usual meeting place of the clan and a house for that purpose is maintained there. A tax is levied on the clan members and applied toward keeping up the ancestral tombs, shrines and sacrifices, or invested in lands or town meeting houses.



11

Marriages between members of the same clan are prohibited and a violation is inconceivable. There are three offences against the clan: a traitor against his country is expelled and not permitted to use the clan name: illicit intercourse between families: and disrespect to parents or old people. Korean families are prevented from becoming extinct by the adoption of male children of the younger generation. Thus some clans are of great antiquity and still live in the same locality where they originated. No totemic names or devices are found in Korea.

Speaking broadly there are only common people and nobles, hardly any of the middle class. The chief and only political function of the former is to pay taxes, that of the latter to gather them in and spend them. Nine tenths of the people are idle. There are various clans and feudalism though existing together with a mild form of slavery is very peculiar. Briefly described the system means a monopoly by the nobles of all sources of revenue derived from the people and public funds. The upper class are not without their troubles, however, as the clan idea makes it necessary to support all parasitic relatives who hang around their more fortunate clansmen. This is shown in its greatest extent by the regents clansmen, the Li, being put out of office to provide for the Min relatives of the queen when the emperor came of age. All political and social life in the country centers around the emperor, the only really free Korean. He is obeyed blindly on pain of imprisonment or assassination for disobedience. All the resources of the empire, even life and death, are in his power although there does exist a sort of written constitution. The Yang-Ban are the nobility and officers of the country, the Yang being the military class and the Ban the literary class formerly. They number about four hundred thousand or, including their families and dependents, two million. Of the Yang-Bans holding governorships and other provincial offices, the large majority live in Seoul where it is much easier to graft on the public treasury. Even the landed proprietors live in Seoul. The Yang-Ban is a drone of the first order, being almost entirely paralysed by long inactivity

He would lose cast if he did a stroke of work. The word itself is synonymous with loss, evil and misfortune. He does not even carry his own pipe and fan and servants support him when walking and riding. Their characteristic swagger is a badge of all their tribe. The most important of the official class is the Ajun, a sort of prefect's minister for the collection of taxes. They act as a buffer between the rapacity of the prefect and the exasperation of the people, being friendly to both sides if possible. Their number varies according to the size and wealth of the province. They are great social factors and influence popular taste and feeling as they are men of some education and culture. The qualities necessary to make a successful Ajun are just such as go to make a successful politician in this country. The lower class is much like that of Japan. Both the environment and personal habit of the Korean peasant are repulsive. He has no incentive to lead a more refined life. This class has practically no education, are very superstitious, happy-go-lucky and lazy; yet they are the hope of Korea as they are more virile than the nobles and have less of the obstinacy borne and bred by centuries of Confucian learning to be overcome before ideas of western civilization and principles of liberty and patriotism can be instilled.

There are three classes of Korean women: the honorable, the respectable and disreputable. The degree of seclusion represents their social position. Women are not much esteemed but they enjoy more freedom than their sisters in India and it is only the upper classes that are kept in almost absolute seclusion. This strict seclusion was introduced five centuries ago because of great social corruption. None but the members of the family are admitted to the women's apartments, even the law may not enter. A woman's idea of liberty is peril. She is of consideration only as she may contribute to the importance of her husband and her comfort and advancement are considered to some extent on this account. Not more than two women in a thousand can read and they have practically no education except for the duties of motherhood and the home. The women of the lower classes are household and

farm drudges and are ill-bred and not graceful and kindly as are their Chinese and Japanese sisters. They have no pleasures, going out only for work and then with covered faces. Of the disreputable class the gesang or dancing girls rank first. Many are maintained at government expense and are trained from an early age in music, singing, dancing, reading and writing, reciting and fancy work. They are elegantly dressed, graceful and charming and are absolutely untrammelled. No man would dare elevate one of this outcast class to the position of wife although they frequently become concubines. No man with any pretensions to wealth or position is without them, especially when he has guests to entertain. The lowest class of women are the sorceresses or mudang--the word meaning deceiving crowd. They pretend to be friends of the spirits and able to influence them as they wish, the extent of the wishing depending upon the amount of money received from the people who want the spirit propitiated. They are called in cases of sickness, particularly smallpox, death or before any great occasion such as a long journey or marriage. Another class are the pansus--deciders of destiny--sometimes women, usually men, but always blind who use various forms of divination. The last class to be considered are slaves, limited to women. One may become a slave in any one of four ways. A woman who has no means of support or needs money to bury a parent may sell herself, giving a deed to her person for a certain sum. She may redeem herself at any time by the payment of the same sum. If a man is convicted of treason he is either executed or banished and his female relatives sold as slaves. If a slave dies her daughter takes her place and is called a seed slave. The fourth way is for a woman to sell herself for food, clothes and shelter. She cannot be liberated by any means. Slaves can marry anyone but the husband must provide his own food. None of the children but the one seed slave daughter become slaves.

Home life is lacking because affection plays no part in marriage. Filial piety, however, is held in the highest esteem and the conduct of a son to his father is guided by a great many rules. On the death of a father, the old-

est son becomes head of the family, responsible for all the duties of a father towards his brothers and sisters who receive no assigned share in the estate. The husband has his life apart: common ties of friendship and interest with the wife are unknown. His pleasure is taken in company with male acquaintances and gesang. The men get a great amount of enjoyment visiting and entertaining their male friends in the sarang or guest room. They never talk politics as that is too dangerous but retail gossip and witicism. A Korean can never keep a secret and it is his business to hear and tell everything he can, creating news if necessary.

The Korean language belongs to the Turanian or Ural-Altaic family and is an agglutinative polysyllabic and phonetic language whose development is marvelously complete and symmetrical. In general it resembles the Japanese in grammatical structure, the Chinese in vocabulary. The written Chinese characters are used by all three peoples but although they present the same idea they are read with totally different words. The Korean vernacular is very different from Chinese but the classics have been so influential that large numbers of Chinese words have found their way into it as Latin has into English. This vernacular is used mainly by the common people and was formerly held in great contempt by the upper classes. About the beginning of the Christian era the written Chinese character came into common use and constituted the strongest bond between China and Korea, for the whole drift of Korean thought was Chinaward and her ideals were cast in Chinese moulds but as the Korean has a far greater degree of ideality the ponderous Chinese literature has been an incubus which he has not the endurance to master nor the courage to discard. The Koreans are homogeneous linguistically and but for the Chinese influences their speech would betray few indications of their mixed origin. Here as elsewhere the primeval languages have refused to intermingle. The Caucasus has perished, leaving the Mongolic to survive. But the dispersion took place at so remote a period that few traces can be



detected of any fundamental unity of speech between the Koreans and surrounding Mongoloid peoples unless possibly the southern Tungusic, another of the Ural- Altaic family.

The national writing system is purely phonetic consisting of an alphabet of great antiquity and unknown origin. It is probably an offshoot of the common alphabetic system formerly diffused throughout eastern Asia and Malasia, scattered members of which are still found among the Lolo and Miao of southwest China, Tayal and Biasayans of the Philippines, and the Dravidians of southern India. The fact of Caucasian or at least Indian intermixture in the Korean race is shown by the undoubted affinity of languages. The Korean or written vernacular, although written like Chinese in vertical columns and read downward right to left, differs from the Chinese structurally as much as Hebrew is unlike English and appears to have been invented or devised by the Buddhist monks from the Sanskrit. The Koreans say that in early times king SeJo convened a college of scholars to devise an alphabet. The monasteries contained Tibetan books with consonants as the foundation and vowels as connecting links but this council believed that the vowel was the basis of speech and so formed six vowels from the ancient Chinese seal characters. These were combined with the Tibetan consonants in triangular syllables so as to resemble the shape of the Chinese. The resulting alphabet of twenty five letters is the second best in the world. The vowels are eleven in number: a, ya, u, yu, o, yo, ŭ, yŭ, i, eu, and ä, with diphthongs, ê, é, è, and œ. There are fourteen consonants in the following groups: labials: p, pa, m; dentals: t, th, n, l; palatals: c, chh, s; gutturals: k, kh; laryngeals: h, ng. There is but one sign for l and r, which at the end of a word has the sound of l, at the beginning the sound of n and between vowels the sound of r.

The three parts of speech are nouns, verbs and particles. There are no real adjectives and no true pronouns. Verbs are about one fifth of the vocabulary. The Korean is poverty stricken in imagination and the faculty of personification, each word representing but one idea. Their language is concise and laconic and is eminently



adapted to public speaking because its periodic sentences reach their climax in the verb which is not followed by any weakening addenda as in English. The noun is without proper declension, distinction of number and place being omitted altogether or expressed by post positive particles. The verb is also without inflection for number and person but has various tense and mode forms averaging as many as three hundred for a verb. Some have no passive but all have the negative voice. Grammar like orthography is very flexible. The phonetic structure is less simple than Japanese, combinations of consonants being more freely allowed and as a consequence monosyllables, rare in Japanese, are common in Korean. A compromise is being made between this native language and the Chinese characters. In 1895 the official gazette published a mixture of these two and the king's oath of independence was published in all three; pure Enmun, Chinese and the mixed script. The latter is now official.

Poetry and history are the two great branches of literature in Korea, fiction taking a lower place. There is practically no literature in the Korean script, only a few trashy novelettes and books of songs; but there are good books in Chinese characters; works of history, philosophy, biography and science, but they are so voluminous that few people possess them. All literature has a backward look, imitation being universal and originality lacking. Korean poetry is all of a lyric nature and has nothing of the epic. It deals with personal, domestic, and even trivial matters. Imagination is not entirely lacking however, as many poetical allusions are introduced into their folk tales.

As in China the classics have been the text-books. School boys seated on the floor sway violently back and forth and recite the classics out loud, the be-goggled teacher before him with rod and book before him. Children begin to study the five rules; to obey the father, to respect the elder brother, to be loyal to the king, to be respectful to the wife and true to friends. Then they are taught to compose letters and next comes the study of history; the Chinese and Confucian classics are next taken up and finally the art of poetical composition

The student reads a third of the time, writes a third and composes the rest of the time. Within a certain fixed limit a graduate is a poet, a prose writer and a dreamer. A gentleman will study classics in the winter, poetry in the spring and in the summer such subjects as will fit him for official duties. The examination system for civil service is similar to that of China. The king appoints judges to examine candidates for office. The subjects selected are from the ancient classics and poetry, criticising of famous men, considering what system of morality is best to correct certain evils and suggesting what military organization is best to protect and control the country. These are supposed to reveal one's nature, one's knowledge and powers, and one's knowledge of persons. This civil service examination nominally opens every office without regard to birth or wealth. These examinations were abolished by the pro-Japanese party in 1894 to rid the country of things Chinese and the resulting corruption. The effort to acquire a difficult language is a good mental discipline but otherwise this education is worse than useless. It has failed to produce patriots, thinkers or honest men. There are now government vernacular schools, government schools for the study of English, foreign language schools and mission schools. There are primary, intermediate and normal schools developing but all are in an elementary stage. The mission schools were the first to be established. The institution which has exercised the greatest influence is the college of the Methodists in Seoul, which gives not only a liberal education but also a broader intellectual view and a deepened moral sense. Medical, theological and industrial training is receiving much attention and schools for the deaf and blind are being established. The Japanese are preparing modern textbooks to take the place of the antiquated Chinese literature and missionaries are devoting part of their time to the translation of the Bible and various other books into the Korean tongue so that the means will soon be at hand for the education of the nation.

"In no department of Korean life is the antiquity of their civilization so clearly demonstrated as in the mosaic of religious beliefs that are held, not only by different individuals but by any single individual. Every Korean mind is a jumble of the whole; there is no antagonism, however, between the different cults although they may logically refute each other, but they have been shaken down together through the centuries until they form a sort of religious composite from which each man selects his favorite ingredients without ignoring the rest. Nor need any man hold to one phase alone. In one frame of mind he may lean toward the Buddhist element and at another he may revert to his ancestral fetishism. As a general thing we may say that an all round Korean is a Confucianist when in society, a Buddhist when he philosophises and a spirit worshiper when he is in trouble. This spirit worship is the underlying religion if he has any. It includes animism, shamanism, fetishism and nature worship generally."

Buddhism and Confucianism were introduced early in our era. The former was too mystical to appeal to the people in its more philosophical aspects but its spectacular character made it the fashionable state religion for a time. The rudiments were brought into the country in the fourth century, followed by larger importations during seven centuries of missionary activities. It was made the national religion and from the eleventh to the fourteenth centuries was the golden age of its success. There were thousands of monasteries, nunneries and temples where Sanskrit was studied and a native literature produced. Buddhism introduced education and culture, promoted physical, moral and intellectual progress up to a certain point, advocated respect for life and elevated humanity but its civilising power is limited as it is unspiritual. The priesthood was ignorant, worship mechanical, idolatry general and the ultimate aim purely selfish. Celibacy was considered the loftiest state and mendicancy the highest ideal of life. Buddhist priests were partisan and politic and rendered assistance to the invading Japanese in 1592 by allowing spies to enter Seoul dressed as priests so the Buddhists were disbarred from the capitol until recently. For five hundred years the Buddhist

*1. The Passing of Korea. Homer B Hulbert p 403-4*

priest has been next to the lowest in the social scale, the butcher alone being below him. Their followers are mainly women and children, and even the late queen sent rich gifts to the monasteries. At present there are forty five shrines scattered on the slopes of the Diamond Mountains tended by about four hundred monks, a few nuns and a host of lay servitors. The great majority are congregated at the four chief monasteries and thenuns have a few sanctuaries where they weave cotton and hemp garments besides performing their religious exercises. The monks travel all over the country, alms bowl in hand, chanting the canons of Buddha and begging food and subscriptions for repairing their altars. Shut out from real intercourse with the world and the source of their religion, they have lost all their cunning in arts and sciences and are a fat, greasy, good-natured, ignorant class, not knowing the meaning of the language used in their chants. The largest monastery is oblong with heavy tiled roof forty eight feet in height, and deep eaves protecting masses of richly colored wood carving. Panels of the doors are bold fret-work. The shrines containing Buddha are highly decorative, and the altars hold brass incense burners, prayer books and lists of those deceased persons for whose souls masses have been paid. The monks are very hospitable and many travellers frequent the monasteries in the seasons for travel.

Confucianism was too cold and materialistic to appeal to the emotional side of the Korean nature so it became merely a political system, the moral elements not being considered to any great extent. Confucianism cannot really be called a religion but is a system of ethics based on man's relations with each other and ignoring God completely excepting only the Emperor's worship of the heavens for himself and people. It is an inadequate conception of man's real position and is a poor ideal as progress is possible only to those who believe that God is an inspiration and help to men. The essence of Confucianism is in the family. Ancestor worship is universal in Korea. The social relations taught are those of sovereign and subject, husband and wife, parent and child, elder and younger brothers and friend and friend which give the five laws of righteousness: deference, friendship, degree and faith. This faith, or rather



er the ancestor worship, is the strongest in Korea. but the educated say there is no utility in it--simply an expression of filial loyalty, and as such it surely has much good effect on the people. Each human being is supposed to possess three souls, the male element goes to heaven at death, the female to Hades and the third to the ancestral tablet. This tablet is kept in an upright position and, for the first three years on the first and fifteenth of each month, and afterward on the anniversary of the death, dishes of food are placed before it for the spirit's consumption. The people think the happiness of both the dead and the living is dependent on this. The evil effects of this cult are many. The best land in Korea is given over to the burial of the dead, forcing the people to live in wretched places and to spend enormous sums on the burial rights and tombs. Early marriage and the system of concubinage is fostered by the necessity of a male heir. Travel is prohibited for the clan must remain together for the stated mourning season. Worst of all is the depression of women to a life of imprisonment and burden bearing with no hope of release.

The purest religion the Korean possesses is the belief in Hananim, Supreme Ruler or Lord of Heaven. He is entirely outside the circle of the various spirits and demons and there is no physical representation or any idolatrous rites connected with his worship. The Temple of Heaven to which the Emperor repairs for worship in times of famine was an idea brought over from China but the worship of Hananim is supposed to be indigenous to Korea. As a rule the people do not worship this spirit but lesser spirits of two orders the spirits of the dead and superhuman spirits. A graphic and correct picture of spirit worship is given by Doctor George Jones, "In the Korean's belief, earth, air, and sea are peopled by demons. They haunt every tree, ravine, c spring and mountain..... They fill the chimney, shed, living room, kitchen; they are on every shelf and jar. In thousands they waylay the traveller as he leaves home. This belief keeps the Korean in a perpetual state of nervous apprehensions. They touch the Korean at every point of his life making his well-being depend on a series of acts of propitiation and they avenge every omission with merci-

1. "Korea in Transition" J. S. Gale p 83.



less severity. Shamanism with crowds of geomancers, horoscopists, fortune tellers, and locaters of graves is omnipresent. The superstitious people are under a regular menagerie of mythical animals; dragons, tigers, serpents and various hoofed, horned, clawed and winged creatures. A few examples of how they are propitiated will give some idea of the large part fear plays in the religious life of the Koreans. Fires are thought to be the work of the fire god and the burning house must be freely offered as a sacrifice and the only effort made to save the surrounding houses is the blowing of trumpets and waving of garments. Smallpox is called an honorable guest and no medicine must be given lest he be outraged. Evil spirits in trees are propitiated by the traveller that he may pass by unharmed. The belief in many spirits leads the people to localise them by means of some physical emblem. Near almost every house may be found a small stake driven in the ground, wrapped in straw and topped with a bit of paper on which are inscribed words of alleged mystical power to keep the god of the site in good humor. When a Korean moves into a new locality he does not take his gods with him but inquires of neighbors the names and attributes of the various local gods that he may in no way antagonise them and bring misfortune upon himself. The god of luck is universally acknowledged by various means of divination. On the fifteenth of each month those whose horoscopes proclaim a bad year throw straw dolls stuffed with cash into the street hoping to throw away the ills of the year.

Turning from these three religions we will next consider the advent of Christianity. The teachings of Catholicism entered Korea in the seventeenth century through members of the embassies to China bringing back books, crosses and images but it was not until the close of the eighteenth century that a Chinese priest managed to enter. The Koreans were singularly ready to accept the faith and adhered to the doctrine even in the face of repeated persecutions. By 1800 there were ten thousand Catholics whose numbers were more than doubled in the twenty years after the advent of the first Jesuit priests in 1837. They entered the country under the mourning guise and accomplished their work secretly until the regent, Taiwunkun, ordered a general

martyrdom in 1866 which cost the lives of several French priests and drew the attention of France and the world to the hermit nation.

Protestant Christianity followed close upon the opening of Korea in 1882. The Korean temperament is such that Christianity, the most rational and at the same time the most mystical of religions finds a ready acceptance. Korean life and thought seems to be a model of scripture times. Their common salutation of "Peace"; the bridegroom's triumphal procession; their dress, girdles, white robes and sandals and sackcloth for mourning are identical with Jewish customs. For thousands of years sheep and oxen have been used in sacrifice. They attribute sickness to the influence of malignant spirits and believe thoroughly in demon possession. In the words of James S. Gale, in his book "Korea in Transition", "Outwardly, by habit, custom and ceremonial form, they are equipped to understand the Bible; the air they breathe seems impregnated with the flavor of the days of Christ; the movings of their world are along the lines of ancient Palestine; their inner thoughts are recorded in the scriptures; their superstitions just as they were in the days of Israel's decline; their understanding of spiritual forces just what the nations around Judea understood them to be; their conclusions concerning life what the worldly of the Bible considered life to be". Even with this prepared ground, mission work was slow until after the heroism and sympathy of the missionaries during the China and Japan war in 1894 and a plague of cholera. Since then Korea has been open to the Gospel as no other field in the world. It has been stated that the alleged rapid progess in Korea is simply a mass movement of peasants which is largely emotional in character but the willingness of the people to hear the Gospel and tell it to others, their generosity in giving time and money and the consistency of their daily life prove that their religion is real. The wonderful revival of 1906 gave the Gospel a strong impetus which has not yet been lost. There are more than 250,000 professed Christians in the country and their numbers are rapidly increasing. Missionary methods are similar to those in other countries, a greater stress being laid on a self-supporting native church and educational work.

1 p/ 154, 155

/"Approaching the Koreans historically and inferring their character from that of their ancestors, one would expect to find them in possession of a great deal of natural ability, and of the ripened fruits of discovery and invention. They used money as a medium of exchange more than a thousand years ago; they made, in 1401, the first metal type that were ever used; they had a phonetic alphabet before 1450; they became acquainted with the mariners compass in 1525, they made an astronomical instrument, which they called the "heavenly measurer" in 1550, they used a mortar with an explosive shell as early as 1592--long before such things were known in Europe and in that same year they attacked the Japanese invaders with a warship which they had plated and protected with iron and built the first suspension bridge for the passage of a large army. The Arab geographer Koradadbeh, who lived in the ninth century and who was the first western writer to mention Korea, speaks of nails, saddles, satin and porcelain as Korean products; and in records of the Japanese we find that the latter learned from their more advanced neighbors such arts of civilization as silk culture and weaving, landscape gardening, flower arrangement, architecture, printing, painting and music, and obtained from them such manufactured articles as harnesses, brocades, pictures, Satsuma faience, weapons, banners and flags. Many of these things the Koreans doubtless borrowed from the Chinese; but the essential point is that they had them made them, or used them, many centuries ago, and must therefore, have been far more civilized and refined than they are now".

The arts of Korea at the present day are easy to dispose of as they are practically nil but there are evidences of a higher standard in former times. At one time Korea was a flourishing center for the ceramic arts and the best samples of ancient pottery are found in graves where it has been placed with the bodies in the belief that the spirits of the dead would need them. With the pottery are parts of bronze horse trappings, gilded rings of copper, objects of stone such as arrow heads and adgers of slate and shale. Of the pottery the various types

*The Korean People the Product of a Decayed Civilization - Geo. Kennan Vol 81 Outlook p 410.*

are as follow ; stone dishes made of dark gray paste, a wine bottle of bright yellow with opalescent coating and bowls of hard opaque paste covered with vitreous green glaze. Wave patterns, floating autumn leaves, arabesque lines and a chrysanthemum design are the chief decorations. The Koreans modified the art ideals of China. In their painting they are strictly realistic with no idealised expressions and no imagination. Colors are primitive and there is no perspective. In mural decoration they have produced some pleasing effects but they are very crude. Artistic taste has not been developed among the wealthy so there are no patrons to encourage the artisans. In fact the wealthy official class act rather as a hindrance. If a man has produced something artistic or elaborate an official usually takes it with no adequate return for the artisan.

Ancient relics aside from those found in the tombs are few in number. There are two dolmens, one being a large stone seven by ten feet resting on three stones four feet high. A marble pagoda said to have been brought by a Mongol queen seven centuries ago is carved in designs representing Hindu divinities. The Great Bronze Bell, the third largest in the world, hangs in the center of Seoul and is rung daily to open and close the gates. It is said to have been erected in 1468. The temple of the god of war is the finest in Korea, frescoes covering the walls of the corridors and court yard. There are gigantic figures around the altar and the sacrificial utensils of the most magnificent kind. At Songdo are the remains of an ancient palace platform of huge blocks of stone, four staircases of thirty steps fifteen feet wide leading up to it. Other relics are a carved marble shaft resting on the back of a turtle found in Seoul and a temple at the supposed tomb of Kitzé, founder of the Korean civilization in 1222 B.C.



Korean industries will be considered briefly. Three fourths of the Koreans are engaged in agriculture. A gentleman can do so without lowering his dignity; even the late Emperor worked in his own paddy field. But agriculture is the only dignified occupation in Korea. There were 6,600,000 acres under cultivation in 1907, but greater thrift or pressure of population would necessitate a much larger acreage. The Korean realises that the source of wealth is the soil and that the safest investment is land. The lands are in reality owned by the king and nobles and farmed out to the peasants, the owner furnishing the seed and the farmer getting only enough of the crop to keep his family until the next harvest. The larger the crop the larger the profit of the owner with no corresponding increase to the man who does the work. The government officials are salaried by giving to each a certain tract of land from the owners and workers of which he squeezes his income. He has agents watch each piece until the harvest, then he swoops down and gathers it in. The fields are irregular, unfenced, weedy and ill cared for. The farmer bears the brunt of taxation. Of the revenue of \$4,500,000 in 1896 half came from the land tax. Of any knowledge as to the proper proportion between stock raising, and crop raising, of the production and use of fertilisers, or of any adequate adjustment in the rotation of crops, the Korean is deficient. He knows that fertilisers must be applied but he often wastes half through ignorance. He has found that the constant raising of the same crop in the same field produces deterioration of the soil and so he changes crops but not systematically or knowing why he changes. What he needs is the practical knowledge which will be gained from the government experimental stations and model farms.

The various trades are silver and goldsmiths, iron and bronze workers, builders and architects, weavers, saddlers, butchers, plowmen, thatchers, hair dressers, tanners and tailors. There is a localisation of industry and a system of apprenticeship exists. In the first year the apprentice is fed, in the second he receives half pay, the third full wages, and the fourth if skillful sets him up in trade for himself. The Koreans excel in all metal work, and nearly all household utensils are made of a composition resembling



bell metal and very light colored from the great alloy of silver. Carpenters and joiners are very clever and use tools similar in shape to those of China though of better finish. Villages of artisans take the place of factories and so industries are sectional. Fans and all bamboo products come from the south, bronze alloy is made in villages where charcoal can be obtained easily and the manufacture of horsehair goods is carried on chiefly in the north. Labor unions and guilds are common and are strict as to the number of apprentices, kind and amount of work done. They give mutual aid in case of sickness, weddings or death. The strongest politically was the peddler's guild used by the government during the independent uprising.

Korean houses are of but one story, flimsily built of wood, clay and thatch. Pillars are set up to support the roof and the space between is filled in with a strong wattle upon which clay and mud is plastered. The houses consist of living room, kitchen, women's room and sarang or the men's public reception room. The rooms are small with little furniture and no beds or chairs. In the better homes the walls and floors and laticed windows are covered with oiled paper. The Korean floor serves as floor and stove, being warmed by a network of flues connected with the kitchen fire. The houses are surrounded by walls and the women are further secluded by being confined to an inner court. Although the Koreans make no use of the arch in their houses they do apply it in bridges and city gates the gates of Seoul being very imposing surmounted by lofty gate houses.

Korean dress is not unbecoming but very impractical especially for workingmen! The universal national dress is white of silk or cotton for the upper classes, of hemp or bleached grass cloth with poorer people. Korean men resemble the Chinese in their jackets, short pantaloons, and long cloaks. Changes are most marked in men's, not women's dress. Formerly class distinction was by dress, courtier's rank being shown by double or single rows of crane's feathers embroidered on it and by the color but now the old laws are only custom. A flowing overcoat of cotton or silk is tied under the armpits with a silk cord girdle. The feet are encased in neat socks made of cotton cloth, leather shoes and cotton garters.

The broad-brimmed hats made of plaited bamboo, lacquered black or stiff gauze horehair are handsome and are the most peculiar feature of Korean dress, which in other respects follows the ancient Chinese pattern. It has been said the object of the wide brims on the hats was to prevent courtiers of a jealous prince from whispering to each other. The Korean takes off his shoes but retains his hat on formal occasions. A greeting of respect is not raising the hat but putting it straight with both hands. This hat is the source of much trouble as in travelling a band box is essential and no Korean will venture out of the house without a waterproof covering folded and concealed in his capacious sleeve. The hats are expensive, sometimes costing as much as \$50.00. Koreans never tattoo or wear earrings but men and women sometimes wear finger rings. Other gold ornaments are rarely seen. The man wears a pouch at his belt for tobacco, one for money and a case for mirror and comb. They never have pockets or buttons.

The dress of the women consists of a skirt, padded in winter, reaching to the ankles, Turkish trousers and a short jacket. For housework a very full apron is worn. A common head dress is a coat thrown over the head and held so the face is partly covered. In the north the women wear an enormous hat of split reeds twelve feet in diameter and three feet high which serves as a protection from men's curiosity when they venture out. Women and children wear their hair in pig-tails, Chinese fashion, leaving combs and such ornaments for the men.

Marriage is the most important factor in the Korean's life. He is a nobody until he is married, the unmarried never being called a man, whatever his age, but goes by the name Yatow, a name given by the Chinese to unmarriageable girls. The man of thirteen or fourteen has a perfect right to strike, abuse or order about the Yatow of thirty, who dares not complain. The wedding day is the boy's entrance on manhood. His name then takes the equivalent of Mr., his hair, which has been worn plaited down his back is put up into a top-knot and he adopts the thin black hat and long full coat.

A go-between is called in to select a wife for the new man. In the choice of a bride the old elements; metal, wood, fire, earth and water are shuffled. Everyone has his fixed element according to the time and locality in which he was born. A girl marked metal is crossed off when a wood boy is in question. Fire and water would mean domestic unhappiness but a wood girl and a water boy would be happy together or an earth girl and a metal man might have unending prosperity. There is no bridal dowry but a large trousseau packed in handsome marriage chests. The night before the marriage takes place, the bridegroom's father sends two pieces of silk for the outer garments of the bride. A number of men carrying gay lanterns bear this present and are met by a party of the bride's friends. A fight ensues, some being seriously hurt. If the bridegroom's party is worsted he will have bad luck. On the bridal day the bride and groom are seated opposite each other and bow to each other. It is this salutation before the assembled guests which alone constitutes a valid marriage. The bride must remain as mute as a statue on her wedding day or be disgraced for life; and her position and refinement are indicated by the number of weeks or months before she speaks to her husband. The man treats his wife with external respect but is ridiculed if he shows her affection. The lower classes beat unfaithful wives but resignation or divorce before a mandarin is the only recourse for upper classmen. Divorce is granted for seven reasons; incurable disease, theft, childlessness, infidelity, jealousy, incompatibility with parents-in-law and a quarrelsome disposition.

Korean burial customs are among the most important of national customs. If the mudang has not been successful in driving out the demon which causes sickness she retires and the sick man is surrounded by his relatives until he dies. His coat is then taken up on the roof by a servant who waves it calling out the name of the man, his rank and informing the spirits that he is dead. The body is placed on the Star Board, wrapped in red blue and yellow grave cloths, and placed near a table containing three bowls of rice and three pairs of sandals for the spirits who come to convey him before the judges. No priest has any part in death or burial. Interment is made from five days to three months and even more in case of royalty. The body is placed in a casket together with favorite books, jewels and all the hair combings and nail clippings which have been carefully saved. The grave site has been selected by a geomancer and the body is borne on a bier accompanied by the relatives dressed in mourning, a sedan chair containing the spirit tablet and slaves carrying banners recording the merits of the dead. An elaborate procession will contain masked figures representing hobgoblins supposed to frighten away all evil spirits and great horses of paper over a wooden framework to be burned at the grave to furnish a means of exit for the spirit of the dead. These are relics of the aboriginal native worship. At the grave a compass is placed on the casket to make sure it is placed in the lucky direction. A southern slope of a hill is usually the position chosen. A huge grass covered mound surrounded by a semicircle of pines and approached by an avenue of carved stone figures mark the spot. These graves are always well cared for. The desecration of a grave is the most serious crime in the penal code. If there is misfortune in the family it is thought that the grave has been disturbed or is not in the proper location so a geomancer is paid to change it. Vast sums of money are expended on burials, sometimes the whole of the estate is squandered, that being an especially meritorious act on the part of the surviving sons.

Early Korean history is mythical and legendary. Nothing is known of the earliest inhabitants or of later immigrants but according to Chinese annals, Kaitse or Kiga and adherent of the overthrown Shang dynasty, entered Korea in 1122 B. C. . He is said to have subdued and civilised the natives of Chosen as it was called then and founded a dynasty which lasted a thousand years. The Koreans sanctioned this legend and point out the site of his capital near Pyeng Yang. Kijun, the last of this dynasty, was overthrown by a Chinese fugitive and forced to flee to southern Korea where he found tribes of southern origin already intermarried with fugitives who had left China at the time of the building of the great wall. At the opening of our era there were three powers in Korea; Silla, or Shanhan in the southeast, the most highly civilised and peaceful; the Mahan in the southwest, a selfish, deceitful people and the warlike Koguryu in the north. With the aid of the allied Chinese, Silla overthrew the other kingdoms in the seventh century and gradually extended her borrowed civilization over all Korea. Chinese law, religion, art, dress, literature and science became the fashion and smothered out the nascent initiative genius of the people and weakened them so that it paved the way for a successful revolt in 945 and the founding of the Buddhist kingdom of Koryu with Songdo as the capital. The social system was still based on Chinese ideas with the literary placed above the military element. There was thus no chance for an elaborate feudalism to spring up, Buddhism controlled the affairs of the dynasty, every third son was forced to become a monk and the monasteries became the repositories of all knowledge. Slavery as a punishment for crime was introduced at this time.

The Mongol invasion in 1231 under Genghis Khan completely devastated the whole of Korea and the king acknowledged his supremacy. Kublai Khan made Korea the basis of operations for his projected attack upon Japan and this largely contributed to the animosity between Korea and Japan although previous to this time Korea had been the teacher of Japan in art science and religion.

After the fall of the Mongol dynasty in China in 1368



the Chinese desired Korea to resume payments of tribute that had previously been in force but the imbecile ruler refused and sent General Yi to attack the Chinese Empire. General and army rebelled, deposed the king and founded the dynasty which still continues. They were entirely dependent upon China; the calendar and chronology, the administrative methods and dress of the Chinese were adopted. The capitol was transferred to Seoul, the kingdom divided into eight provinces, Buddhism almost entirely suppressed and a stern Confucianism practically became the state religion. Great literary works were published, metal printing type invented, monasteries were turned into schools, and the piratical raids of the Japanese stopped for a time. A Japanese legend tells of an invasion of Korea in 207 A.D. under the Empress Jingu and the surrender and payment of tribute to her. Whatever the truth of this is, the Japanese had received tribute up to 1460 and the invasion of 1592 under Hideyoshi was to punish its omission since that time. They advanced as far north as Pyeongyang but were driven back by the Koreans and Chinese and the loss of their fleet at the hands of Admiral Yi and his ironclad forced them to retire. They devastated the country as they went, and took a whole colony of ceramic artists to Satsuma to carry on their industry. These actions greatly augmented the Korean hatred of the Japanese and the Koreans turned more and more toward China.

Modern history may be said to commence with the opening of Korea by the Japanese in 1876. France and America had made ineffectual attempts to enter the country to secure redress for the death of their citizens previous to this time. After the signing of the first treaty with Japan there were endless struggles internally between the foreign and anti-foreign factions and Korea's history from 1876 to 1882 was bloody. The Koreans relaxed in no way their hatred of the Japanese and even the Queen's party, which had allowed the signing of the treaty was not friendly to Japan. China was more popular and in their eyes a better protector than Japan. There were three distinct parties; the Taiwankun, out of power but in touch with the soldiery and reactionary element,

The Queen's party relying on China and the pro-Japanese who looked to Japan as a new source of power and inspiration. The burning of Japan's legation and the expulsion of the minister resulted finally in Japan gaining all her demands. Many of the leading Korean statesmen visited Japan and strengthened the ties between the two countries.

In 1883 Commodore Schufeldt drew up a treaty between Korea and the United States and General Foote was our first minister. German and British treaties soon followed and Korea was a recognised treaty power. But internal affairs were still unsettled and the crisis in the relations of the rival factions came in 1884. The reform movement gained the government for a time but Chinese troops forced them to withdraw leaving Korea in China's hands for ten years. After this trouble, Count Ito for Japan and Li Hung Chang for China drew up a treaty stating that "the pretention of Japan over Korea is economical, that is she doesnot claim any legal authority over Korea, but from her geographical position and the necessity of providing for her constantly increasing population, she is intent on utilisinf Korea as the best sourcee from which the defect of the home production of rice is to be supplied, as well as the nearest field in which the future sons of Japan may find employment. For this purpose Japan would have Korea always independent and under no foreign influence, but within the last years China has been sending militar and political agents to Korea and interfering with Korean international affairs, as if she intended to make real her pretentions over Korea, which have long since become purely historical. This state of things must be rectified for Japan would never conseht to Korea's becoming in reality a part of the Chinese Empire". China and Japan pledged themselves to qithdraw their forces from Korea and not to send others in at any time without first notifying the other country so in 1894 when the revolt of fanatical Tonghaks broke out and the government applied to China for help troops were sent in and Japan was notified. Japan sent troops also but when the revolt was put down Japan refused to withdraw her troops until there was an understanding con-

1. "The Question of Korea", Alfred Stead pp 85-2, 3  
Vol 80 Fortnightly Review 1903

cerning various reforms. On China's refusal to discuss the question, the Japanese sunk an English transport filled with Chinese troops without first declaring war. A ministry was formed in Seoul which concluded an alliance with Japan to expel the Chinese. The ensuing war resulted in victory for Japan.

The progressive Korean party now looked to Japan for help but instead she played a large part in revolts and political murders, culminating in implication with the murder of the queen October 8, 1895. The Japanese government repudiated the crime, recalled and tried the minister and forbade her subjects to enter Korea without special permission. Following the murder of the Queen, the king escaped from his palace and took refuge in the Russian legation from which he directed the affairs of the nation, superintended the burial ceremonies of the Queen and built a new palace. As early as 1866 Russia's scheme for placing Korea under her protection was formulated, but being detected by a Chinese agent, Great Britain extracted a promise that Russia would not touch Korean territory. Russia did everything in her power to encourage Koreans to settle in her far eastern possessions and through these settlers began her intrigues in Korea. She gained a number of concessions such as a lower rate of customs on Russian land imports, telegraphic connections and right to have agents in northern Korea. In the two years of Japan's supremacy after the war with China, the Japanese underrated the traditional hostility of the masses of Koreans and overestimated their own ability to introduce reforms. The instability of the Tokio government and the six changes of ministers to Korea shortened Japan's influence there. Japan, realising her position, after the king's flight to the Russian legation, turned her attention to securing commercial and financial control of Korea. Russia's period of ascendancy was marked by an agreement whereby only Russians and Koreans should hold important offices.

In 1901 the seizure of Manchuria by Russia warned Japan that it was to be merely useful as a base for operations on Korea. The splendid ports of Korea were coveted by Russia for termini of her vast railway system as

and economic interests in Korea, Great Britain recognises Japan's right to take such measures for the guidance, control and protection of Korea as she may deem proper and necessary to safeguard those interests, providing the measures so taken are not contrary to the principle of equal commerce and industry of all nations". Korea felt that such agreements and the acquiescence of other nations to what she considered a bondage was unfair, particularly when the United States had promised to aid Korea if at any time her independence or territory were endangered. Many Koreans were committing suicide rather than see their country in the hands of the Japanese and during the year 1907 Korea attempted to regain independence by despatching a delegation to the Hague conference to show to the world the Korea's signature to the treaty of 1905 which turned over the foreign affairs to Japan was forged and that Japan was not intending to fulfil her promises of independence. This brought on a crisis and the Emperor was forced to abdicate in favor of his son, the crown prince, as he would not apologize to Japan, and Ito became the real ruler with a Japanese army to take the place of the forcibly disbanded Korean army.

Japan herself set to the task of reforming Korean affairs, giving the people a standard currency as the basis for commercial activity, a system of just weights and measurements, surveying and registering real estate, codifying laws, encouraging agriculture by experimental farms, teaching forest culture, improving roads and in general giving exact and practical teaching along all lines. During the past five years Korea has spent \$40,000,000 on the railroads. On July 12, 1909, Korea delegated to Japan the administration of justice and prisons. For awhile Japanese courts, Korean courts, and consul courts all were used, but the Koreans preferred the Japanese and so the others were abolished. Japan was limited in her reform measures because she worked through the Korean government, especially the old Emperor who is characterised as "unconscious as a child, stubborn as a Boer, ignorant as a Chinaman and vain as a Hottentot. He was not only bad but weak and cowardly and ruled by sor-

*"Korea a Degenerate State," Geo. Kennan, p 308, Vol 81 Outlook.*



ceresses". His son was no better, being almost an intellectual and moral weakling.

It was only natural with a people who could not reform themselves even if they cared to, that a protectorate should end in annexation. The treaty was signed August 22, 1910 and states that "owing to the spirit of suspicion and distrust and the failure to carry out suggested reforms, Japan undertakes the entire government and administration of Korea to maintain peace and promote the prosperity of the Koreans and to insure the safety of foreign residents." Chosen, the old title for the Land of Morning Calm is now the official title. The Korean court is maintained with an organization parallel to that of the Japanese Crown Prince. The Emperor is now Prince Gi and ranks just below the Japanese Crown Prince. Foreigners are promised the same rights in Korea as in Japan. The present tariff rate will be maintained for ten years and during that same period foreign vessels can engage in the coasting trade between Korean open ports and between those ports and open ports of Japan. This trade at the present time does not amount to much as<sup>2</sup> according to official statistics for 1908, America's share in the foreign commerce of Korea was 10%, Great Britain's 12% and China's 13% whereas Japan got 63% out of a total of 5,500,000 yen".

A great deal has been written about Japan's mismanagement and the brutality of her citizens to Koreans. They have undoubtedly made many mistakes. The uprooting of national customs, such as wearing top-knots, unharmed in themselves but meaning much to the people who practised them made Japan unpopular and even detestable and rightly so. The first influx of Japanese during the Russo-Japanese war were such as in America flock to every new mining country. They committed many outrages but as soon as the war was over they were brought under better control and now a peaceful, industrial class are going in. It is true that the Japanese did seize and hold land illegally even in the building of the railroad but this has been adjusted and the lands paid for. The main trouble was that the Japanese proceeded too rapidly with their reforms, forcing them upon an unready and even antagonistic people. They also made the grave error of attempting to develop material

1. 1911 Almanac
2. Passing of Korea - Zurnato p 452 Independent, Sept 1, 1910



resources before reforming the civil government. The Japanese immigrants should have been kept at home until this was done. Japan counted too much on foreign intercourse and western culture fostering a national spirit of independence and patriotism but she misjudged the strength and weakness of the Koreans and their incapability of resisting their tendencies of wholesale corruption.

The experiment of amalgamation is unique and if successful will eclipse all known victories. Korea stands in much the same relation to Japan as Egypt to England or the Philippines to the United States with this exception that the Japanese and Koreans are related ethnically. For years Japan lent her best statesmen and lavished her money to aid Korea into freedom and modern life partly of course from an intelligent selfishness but with a strain of profound racial sympathy. The Japanese are leading the Orient and have as one of their ideals the reformation of China which can most successfully be brought about through the connecting link, Korea. Japan cannot be censured for taking away what Korea never had, complete sovereignty. In return for the mere name of independence, Japan has given Korea a system of manual training, common and high schools, commercial, industrial, agricultural and medical colleges, having already appropriated \$250,000.00. In the Industrial Training Institute at Seoul six lines of modern technical training are established. Where public hygiene was unknown Japan has introduced waterworks, hospitals and other means of preserving life and making it worth living. To understand the enormity of their task a review of Korean government conditions will be necessary.

The form of government which prevailed until recent years had existed from most ancient times. The king was the only stable factor and in one sense the power of the ruler was absolute but he had to depend on the information brought to him by the ones who carried out his will as his divinity made seclusion essential. All through the early years, the civil and military branches of the government were so evenly balanced that there was always a contest between them for the king's favor. During the golden age of Korea's art and literature no faction was powerful enough to gain supremacy. This period was soon followed

*1. "Japan's Absorption of Korea" W. E. Griffis p 524  
North American Review Oct 1910*

by political strife and the ideal of all was official position sufficiently secure to make the acquisition of wealth easy and revenge on all enemies possible. The common people constantly went down in the social scale except at such times when patience was entirely exhausted and they appealed to popular riot as their only protection. If a prefect or governor was driven out of his place by such an uprising the government dared not replace him.

As to the technical government there was a prime minister with two assistants who were the highest authorities in all official affairs. A censor, however, could criticize their actions or even the king's and pass on all government measures before they went into operation. Then came the six ministers of the Interior, Law, Ceremonies, Finance, War and Industries. Rank and real nobility were essential for office until the power of money in politics began to make itself felt early in the nineteenth century and the line of demarcation between the upper and lower classes was gradually obliterated and public offices were bought and sold openly with a regular schedule of prices ranging from fifty thousand dollars for a governorship to five hundred dollars for a magistracy. As this money was very acceptable at the capital tenure of office was shortened so they could be sold oftener the people being taxed heavily to pay the necessary sum. Formerly a governor was chosen from a local family but later he was a friend or relative of some high official having no personal interest in his district. His ability was measured by the skill shown in keeping his finger on the public pulse and knowing just when the patience of the victim was exhausted and a revolt imminent. Each prefect was a miniature of the central government with its six ministers, the Yangban as ruler and the Ajuns as assistants.

The penal code of Korea is interesting. Until recent years the method of capital punishment was decapitation but now strangulation or poisons are used. Treason, murder, grave desecration and highway robbery were common offences calling for capital punishment. Banishment has always been a method of punishing officials. Other forms of punishment were beating, imprisonment and the chain gang. No criminal could be executed until he had been beaten

long enough to force him to acknowledge his crime and the justice of his sentence. There were no lawyers, the governor or prefect acting as judge to bring out all facts as to the prisoner's guilt or innocence. If the desired information was not forthcoming, the paddle usually brought it out irrespective of truth. Blackmail was common in all walks of Korean life, regular sums being paid to the judge for the privilege of being free from trial or the witness stand.

By the treaty of February 23, 1904, the Japanese government guaranteed the independence and territorial integrity of the country. By treaty of 1905 a Japanese resident general exercises a supervision over Korean affairs assisted by a director general and directors of finance, police, judicial affairs, railways, posts, agriculture, industry and commerce. The village system was reorganised and each provided with new officers; the head man, clerk and bailiff. Local government is now administered in thirteen provinces subdivided into thirty nine districts. The central government consists of six departments; home office, treasury, education, justice, industries and household. All members have a seat in the cabinet and there is a privy council.

There is nothing certain in the future of Korea, as the experiment Japan is trying is unique and we have no precedent by which to determine the outcome. Whether the Koreans accept the guidance of Japan and develop into a strong people capable of self government as an independent nation; Whether they remain a dependent people but retaining their national characteristics, or whether they are absorbed by the Japanese and entirely lose their identity can only be determined after years of time have elapsed and this problem of the regeneration of a people will remain one of the most interesting of ethnological studies.



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